

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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P R 141531Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7130
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR
USDOCOSOUTH
USNMR SHAPE
SECDEF
DIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 1472

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (ELLSWORTH, ROBERT) PFOR, MT
SUBJ: VISIT OF DEPUTY SECRETARY ELLSWORTH TO MALTA

REF: (A) STATE 297336 DTG 071648Z DEC 76; (B)
VALLETTA 1444 (NOTAL), 1438 (NOTAL) 1366 (NOTAL)

1. DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT ELLSWORTH'S
DEC 12-14 VISIT TO MALTA WAS COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY IN
ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDANCE CONTAINED IN REFTTEL (A).
THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE GOM MINISTRY OF
FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS WERE IN CHARGE OF ALL
OFFICIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE VISIT AND MOST HELPFUL IN
ASSURING THAT EVERYTHING WENT SMOOTHLY. THERE WERE NO
PROBLEMS WHATSOEVER CONCERNING ANY ASPECT OF THE VISIT,
AND THE USE BY MR. ELLSWORTH OF AN OFFICIAL USAF PLANE
CAUSED LITTLE COMMENT AND NO DIFFICULTIES.

2. IN ADDITION TO RECEIVING THE MEDAL AND SCROLL OF
MEMBERSHIP IN THE MALTESE SOCIETY OF HONOR ON DECEMBER 13,
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DEPUTY SECDEF ELLSWORTH HAD THREE SEPARATE MEETINGS

WITH PRIME MINISTER DOM MINTOFF. IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS ARRIVAL ON DECEMBER 12, MR. ELLSWORTH JOINED THE PRIME MINISTER FOR LUNCH AND INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS AT MINTOFF'S RESIDENCE. ON DECEMBER 13, MR. ELLSWORTH PARTICIPATED IN A MORE FORMAL MEETING WITH MINTOFF AT THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, AND THEIR FINAL SESSION TOGETHER WAS IN MINTOFF'S OFFICE ON DECEMBER 14, FOLLOWING WHICH MR. ELLSWORTH WENT DIRECTLY TO THE AIRPORT AND DEPARTED FOR PARIS.

3. WHILE IN MALTA, MR. ELLSWORTH ALSO MET WITH ITALIAN AMBASSADOR ERIC DA RIN (AT DA RIN'S REQUEST), AND MR. ELLSWORTH AND HIS MILITARY ASSISTANT HAD DINNER WITH THE CHARGE, THE DATT AND THEIR WIVES.

4. THERE WERE TWO MALTESE AND SIX FOREIGN RECIPIENTS OF THE SOCIETY OF HONOR AWARD ON DECEMBER 13. IN ADDITION TO MR. ELLSWORTH, THE OTHER FOREIGN RECIPIENTS WERE: ABDULATI L-OBEIDI, MINISTER OF WORKS AND PUBLIC SERVICES OF THE LIBYAN ARAB REPUBLIC; PROFESSOR ERNEST WOLF MOMMSEN, FORMER MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENSE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY; GENERAL GIUSEPPE PIOVANO AND COLONEL UMBERTO PELIZZOLA OF THE ITALIAN ARMY; AND LADY JULIET BINGLEY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. AN AWARD ALSO WAS OFFERED ARCHBISHOP AGOSTINO CASAROLI OF THE VATICAN, BUT THE NECESSARY "PROTOCOL ARRANGEMENTS" WERE NOT COMPLETED, SO THIS AWARD WAS NOT PRESENTED.

5. THE OFFICIAL CITATION FOR DEPUTY SECDEF ELLSWORTH'S AWARD WAS AS FOLLOWS:

"ROBERT ELLSWORTH WHO, DURING THE DISPUTE BETWEEN MALTA AND THE NATO COUNTRIES, AS SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES FULLY UNDERSTOOD THAT MALTA IN ITS ACTIONS WAS NOT MOTIVATED BY HATRED TOWARDS AMERICA OR BY ANY DESIRE TO SERVE THE ENEMIES OF AMERICA, BUT THAT MALTA WAS ONLY ASPIRED TO TAKE ITS PLACE AMONGST THE FREE NATIONS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ITS CITIZENS AND FOR PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES; AND FOR DOING HIS UTMOST SO THAT A NEW AGREEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO ALL CONCERNED COULD BE REACHED FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF THIS AIM."

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6. COMMENT: THE AWARD CEREMONIES WERE BRIEF, BUT DIGNIFIED, AND WELL COVERED BY THE MALTESE PRESS AND TELEVISION. THERE HAS NOT, AS YET, BEEN ANY COMMENTARY ON THE LOCAL POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AWARDS, ALTHOUGH IT IS OBVIOUS THAT PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF WAS ANXIOUS TO RECOGNIZE AS MANY OF MALTA'S "FRIENDS" AS POSSIBLE FOR PAST SERVICES, AT A TIME WHEN HIS GOVERNMENT IS SEEKING WIDESPREAD SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE IN ITS "FORMIDABLE TASK"

OF OBTAINING AN ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE ANNUAL
SUBSIDY IT NOW RECEIVES FROM THE MALTESE-UNITED KINGDOM
MILITARY FACILITIES AGREEMENT. DEPUTY SECDEF ELLSWORTH
WILL REPORT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS TALKS WITH MINTOFF
AFTER HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S
IMPRESSION THAT THEIR MEETINGS SERVED THE VERY USEFUL
PURPOSE OF PERMITTING A FRANK, COMPREHENSIVE EXCHANGE
OF VIEWS ON BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL MATTERS OF
MUTUAL INTEREST WITHOUT, HOWEVER, INVOLVING AND US
COMMITMENT TOWARD MALTA'S SECURITY AND ECONOMIC REQUIREMENTS
AFTER THE UK WITHDRAWAL IN 1979. END COMMENT.
WIGGINS

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